



RESOLUTION NO. 263, SERIES 2011

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CHARTER FOR COMPASSION; DECLARING LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY A PARTICIPANT IN A TEN-YEAR CAMPAIGN FOR COMPASSIONATE CITIES; ESTABLISHING APRIL AS “COMPASSIONATE ACTION MONTH;” AND DECLARING LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY “THE COMPASSIONATE HEART OF AMERICA” AS AMENDED

Sponsored by: Council Members Miller, Ward-Pugh, Owen, Scott, Shanklin, Woolridge, Tandy, Hamilton, James, Fleming, King, Kramer, Blackwell, Welch, Henderson, Butler, Downard, Stuckel, Benson, Johnson, Engel, Peden, Flood, Yates, B. Ackerson

WHEREAS, MAYOR GREG FISCHER HAS MADE COMPASSION ONE OF THE THREE FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION; AND,

WHEREAS, because local governments around the world are unable to provide the previous levels of services, a growing network of individuals and groups organized around compassion are empowering our community to meet these growing needs; and,

WHEREAS, Louisville is a quintessential “heartland America” city — neither north, south, nor coastal, and located close to the mean center of the United States population; and,

WHEREAS, Louisville contains a diverse spectrum of religious, political, and ethnic groups embodying the best of American values; and,

WHEREAS, in April 11-15, 2008, the Seeds of Compassion gathering in Seattle, Washington, was an unprecedented community-focused gathering of tens of thousands of people to explore the relationships, programs and tools that nurture and empower children, families and communities to be compassionate members of society; and

WHEREAS, out of the Seeds of Compassion gathering in Seattle grew the International Campaign for Compassionate Cities (“ICCC”); and

WHEREAS, Ari Cowan, the Chief Strategy Officer of the ICCC visited Louisville, Kentucky May 16 through May 19, 2011 to evaluate Louisville as a potential partner city in this international effort; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cowan wrote, “I’m impressed with what you’ve accomplished in Louisville, both in terms of your organization of the elements to mobilize the campaign as well as the broad constituency you’ve involved. Our interest is in having Louisville move forward with affirming the Charter and proclaiming support for a 10-Year Campaign as soon as possible. If done directly, Louisville would be an ‘early adopter’ and leader in this effort. What you’ve done and are moving forward in doing shows clear leadership. This will be of enormous value to communities, universities, businesses, schools, prisons, cities, counties, states and provinces, and nations joining in this extraordinary world-wide effort;” and

WHEREAS, with connections to Thomas Merton and Muhammad Ali, both known world-wide for their compassion, Louisville can become a global beacon to the world; and

WHEREAS, Louisville is internationally known for its leadership and innovation in the continuing effort to promote the values of justice, equity and respect for all peoples through organizations such as the Center for Interfaith Relations and its Festival of Faiths; through the Ali Center and its global outreach; through the Merton Institute for Contemplative Living; through Interfaith Paths to Peace and its extensive programs; through EDGE Outreach, empowering ordinary people to provide clean, safe water to people around the world; through the area community ministries which are a model for the nation; through USA Harvest; and through individual and organizational efforts too long to list; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge our role and responsibility to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our city and through educational efforts and deliberate actions; and

WHEREAS, there are still many instances where individuals and groups fail to live compassionately and thus we acknowledge we must recommit to, and broaden, this effort in all places of the community.

WHEREAS, be it resolved by the Council of the Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government as follows:

SECTION I: THAT the Louisville Metro Council and the Mayor of Louisville affirm the Charter for Compassion (attached hereto) and extend the Charter to include Mother Earth and all of Her inhabitants, including animals;

SECTION II: THAT Louisville declares a Ten Year Compassionate City Campaign and hereby expresses its desire to be a lead city in this effort;

SECTION III: THAT April is designated Compassionate Action Month in Louisville;

SECTION IV: THAT Louisville, Kentucky is declared the Compassionate Heart of America;

SECTION V: THAT Louisville welcomes guests from all around the world to learn about the commitment to compassionate action that exists here;

SECTION VI: THAT all citizens of Louisville are encouraged to affirm the Charter for Compassion and to strive to live and act more compassionately; and

SECTION VII: THAT this Resolution shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

Kathleen J. Herron
Metro Council Clerk

Jim King
President of the Council

Greg Fischer
Mayor

Approval Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Michael J. O'Connell
Jefferson County Attorney

BY: _____

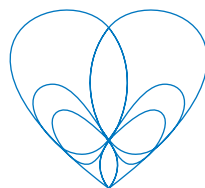
CHARTER FOR COMPASSION

THE PRINCIPLE OF COMPASSION lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honor the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

IT IS ALSO NECESSARY in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others—even our enemies—is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

WE THEREFORE CALL UPON ALL MEN AND WOMEN ~ to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion ~ to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate ~ to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures ~ to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity ~ to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings—even those regarded as enemies.

WE URGENTLY NEED to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.



COMPASSIONATE
LOUISVILLE